

4th BCT Soldiers host local community leaders for day of Army training at Fort Hood

Story and Photos by Spc. Jason Dangel
4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

Representative John Carter, a U.S. Congressman, and more than 85 local community leaders from Williamson County joined Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, for a day of Army training and “HOOAH!” fun at various training centers across Fort Hood May 31.

The community outreach event, organized by III Corps and Fort Hood, provided the central Texas citizens an opportunity to see “Cobra” Brigade Soldiers up close and personal as they completed various training events with the Soldiers throughout the day.

“There is only a short distance from Williamson County to Fort Hood, but most of us don’t really know what goes on inside the gate – and that is what I want everyone who attended today’s event to see,” Carter said. “If a person takes the time to talk to Soldiers they will quickly realize that these are some of the greatest people that walk this earth.”

With 4th BCT Soldiers by their side every step of the way, the citizens got a chance to participate and train on pre-deployment training systems, such as Fort Hood’s Convoy Tactical Trainer, the Engagement Skills Trainer, the Warrior Skills Trainer, Medical Simulation Training Center and a small-arms range, where each had the opportunity to fire an M-4 Carbine Assault Rifle.

The community leaders were also treated to an AH-60 Blackhawk aerial tour over Fort Hood.

The Convoy Tactical Trainer, which mimics and trains Soldiers for combat convoy operations, proved to be the pinnacle of the day for many of the citizens attending the event, said Mary Bradshaw, Williamson County Chamber of Commerce President.

Bradshaw, who acted as a gunner during the convoy scenario, said despite the fact the CTT was only a simulation, the training was realistic and unmatched to anything she had ever seen before.

“I would have to say that the live convoy training was the most exciting part of the day so far,” she said, after disembarking from the turret and gunner’s position at the CTT.

“It definitely gave me some insight into what Soldiers go through as far as all the gear and protective equipment they have to wear and how hot it must be for all of them,” she explained.

The culmination of the day’s events provided community leaders a better understanding of the day-to-day operations at the central Texas military complex and also served to remind Soldiers of how much their service is appreciated by the members of the local community, said Spc. Danny Lopez, Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th BCT.

“It’s great that these people got to see what we do since they support us,” Lopez said, after giving a brief overview of his units’ mission in Iraq to the curious Williamson County citizens.

“All the training we have planned for them today gives them a chance to see how we operate and also gives them an idea of what exactly they support, and I think that is extremely important,” he added.

Leaders across the 4th Inf. Div. and the installation maintain that the great relationship between Fort Hood and the surrounding communities will continue to increase.

According to Fort Hood Officials, the population around Fort Hood is expected to increase almost 200 percent by the year 2012, and as of last week, plans to start building a new Texas A&M University central Texas complex have been approved.

“We have some tremendous training areas here, and some tremendous training simulation, which makes this place a great place to deploy from because it’s a strategic projection platform and because of our congressman and his colleagues that have helped us so much to enhance this garrison and the community,” said Brig. Gen. William Grimsley, deputy commanding general – support, 4th Inf. Div.

“Our surrounding communities here in central Texas are wonderfully supporting people for our Soldiers and Families,” Grimsley continued. “All of central Texas has opened its arms and hearts and continues to provide absolutely the best place for our Soldiers to train and take care of their families.”



Bradshaw takes up gunner's position.

Mary Bradshaw, Williamson County Chamber of Commerce president, mans a gunner's position during a training event with members of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, at Fort Hood's Combat Convoy Tactical Trainer. Representative John Carter, a U.S. Congressman, and more than 85 other local community leaders from Williamson County, joined Soldiers from the 4th BCT for a day of Army training and fun at various training locations across Fort Hood May 30. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Congressman gets some breakfast.

Representative John Carter, a U.S. Congressman, of Williamson County, serves himself some breakfast during a visit to Fort Hood and the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, with more than 85 other local community leaders from the central Texas area May 30. The community outreach event, organized by III Corps and Fort Hood, provided the central Texas citizens a chance to see Soldiers from the 4th BCT up close in action as they completed various training events with the Soldiers throughout the day.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Eivans visits MSTC.

Brenda Eivans, Cedar Park city manager, listens closely as Steve Garza, Fort Hood Medical Simulation Training Center Site Manager, provides instruction during a medical training scenario at the MSTC. Eivans, along with Representative John Carter, a U.S. Congressman, and more than 85 other local community leaders from Williamson County visited Fort Hood for a day of Army training and fun with Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, at various training locations Wednesday.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Training on weapons.

Spc. Danny Lopez, Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, shows a central Texas community leader how to operate from a gunner's position during a simulated training event at Fort Hood's Combat Convoy Tactical Trainer May 30. More than 85 other local community leaders from Williamson County joined Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, for a day of Army training and fun at various training locations across Fort Hood.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)